

**1. The Washington Times reports today that Senate Democrats blocked an attempt to pass the Broadcast Freedom Act.**

Below are excerpts. You

can access the full story

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You can access the roll call vote [here](#) .

*Senate Democrats last night beat back a Republican attempt to attach an anti-Fairness Doctrine bill as an amendment to education legislation.*

*The doctrine, a former requirement that broadcasters present opposing points of view on political issues, was scrapped in 1987 by the Federal Communications Commission, which said the policy restricted journalistic freedom. The bill by Sen. Norm Coleman, Minnesota Republican, would prevent the FCC from reinstating the doctrine.*

*"We live in an age of satellite radio, of broadband, of blogs, of Internet, of cable TV, of broadcast TV. There is no limitation on the ability of anyone from any political persuasion to get their ideas set forth," Mr. Coleman argued in support of the Broadcaster Freedom Act of 2007. "The public in the end will choose what to listen to."*

*By a vote of 49-48, senators voted not to consider Mr. Coleman's amendment after Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, Massachusetts Democrat, raised a point of order. Senate rules require 60 votes to waive a point of order.*

*An attempt by Mr. Coleman last week to attach his bill as an amendment to a defense authorization bill was similarly blocked by Sen. Richard J. Durbin, Illinois Democrat.*

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*While the current Republican-led FCC poses no threat of reinstating the Fairness Doctrine, Republicans in both the House and Senate were quick to introduce bills that would prohibit a future Democrat-led agency from doing so. In the House, Rep. Mike Pence, Indiana Republican, has 135 co-sponsors of his version of the Broadcaster Freedom Act.*

*Mark S. Fowler, the former FCC chairman who led the charge to shelve the doctrine prior to its later repeal, said calls for its revival are "unacceptable."*

*Asked whether there is any viable chance of the policy being reinstated, Mr. Fowler told editors and reporters at The Washington Times yesterday: "I don't think so; I hope not."*

*"The electronic press that uses electrons and airwaves should be as free as the press that uses ink and paper, period," he said.*

*He asserted that lawmakers who say the doctrine is in the public interest are "politicians trying to control part of the press. To say the airwaves belong to the people — all these reasons they*

*use to regulate are excuses. They're not reasons."*

### **2. Recent columns on the Fairness Doctrine**

-- *The Economist's* Lexington column: ["Let the Blowhards Blow"](#)

--Byron York: [Why Rush Wins](#)

--Victor Davis Hanson: [All's Fair in Love and Talk Radio](#)